



COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE POLICY & FINANCING

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Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor • Joan Henneberry, Executive Director

DATE: Week Ending Friday, April 10, 2009

TO: Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Community

FROM: Ginny Brown, Legislative Liaison and Nicole Storm, Legislative Analyst

RE: Legislative Report – 2009 Session of the Colorado General Assembly

HB09-1293, **Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act**, Representatives Ferrandino and Riesberg and Senators Keller and Boyd, passed third and final reading in the Senate and now moves to the leadership for their signatures before going to the Governor. This bill would allow Colorado to leverage state funds to draw down additional federal funds to provide coverage to more than 100,000 uninsured Coloradans. The proposal also would help stem the rising cost of health insurance for businesses and families by addressing cost-shifting, one of the key drivers of rising costs, without increasing the burden on taxpayers. By assessing a provider fee on hospitals, Colorado would generate an additional \$600 million a year to provide coverage to the uninsured, and receive \$600 million in federal matching funds. The combined \$1.2 billion would cover more than 100,000 currently uninsured Coloradans through Medicaid and the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). The funds also would improve hospital reimbursement rates for service provided through Medicaid and the Colorado Indigent Care Program (CICP).

The Long Bill, SB09-259, was introduced on Monday, April 6th in the Senate and assigned to the Appropriations Committee. The General Assembly's permanent fiscal and budget review agency, the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), writes the annual appropriations bill - called the Long Bill - for the operations of state government. The JBC has six members: the Chairman and one majority and one minority member of the House Appropriations Committee, and the Chairman and one majority and one minority member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Members serve two-year terms and are selected following the general election. Traditionally, the Senate elects its JBC members. In the House, the Speaker appoints the majority party members, and the minority party elects its member. The chairmanship alternates between the Chairmen of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. After both houses adopt the conference committee report, the bill is sent to the Governor. The Governor has line item veto power in acting on the bill. The bill and its amendments will be debated by the legislature in the coming weeks.

For more information about legislative activities please contact Ginny Brown 303-866-3972 or Nicole Storm 303-866-3180 or access www.colorado.gov to search the General Assembly Web site. A legislative report will be updated weekly on our Web site www.colorado.gov/hcpf under Partners and Research, Legislative Information, Legislative Update.